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Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat meets with Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu yesterday in Davos. (Avi Ahayon/GPO)

PM, Arafat to meet Thursday at Erez

Levy: Hizbullah has received 30 Iranian planeloads of weapons since Grapes of Wrath

By DAVID MAKOVSKY and news agencies

Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu and Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat agreed yesterday in Davos, Switzerland, to meet again at the Erez junction on Thursday as the first step toward launching the security-related panels reached as part of the Hebron accord.

However, it remains unclear whether Israel is sufficiently organized to have assembled negotiating teams needed for dealing with the issues at hand: the PA establishment of both an airport and seaport in Gaza; safe passage for Palestinians between Gaza and the West Bank; and release of Palestinian prisoners.

In a panel session last night at the World Economic Forum's conference,

which is bringing together more than 1,000 corporate executives to meet with world leaders, Arafat complained that Israel is hurting the PA's economy and that Israel owes the PA hundreds of millions of dollars in tax rebates.

In his remarks, Netanyahu heralded Israel as one of the great high-tech centers of the world and predicted that Israel's gross national product per capita—currently at about \$16,000—will double within the next 10 years.

Meanwhile, in a speech to Jewish activists in Paris yesterday, Foreign Minister David Levy said that an estimated 30 Iranian planes have landed at Damascus airport since the end of Operation Grapes of Wrath, with weaponry destined for Hizbullah in southern Lebanon. US officials confirm that until the military operation last spring, about three Iranian planes per

year landed in Damascus, but since the operation, this figure has grown to about three per month. The exact contents of the planes remain largely unknown, but they are thought to include Katyusha rockets and ammunition.

Netanyahu held separate meetings with Arafat and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak yesterday, as all three are attending the conference at the Swiss resort. The Mubarak-Netanyahu meeting is their first since the two met in Cairo, when their relationship subsequently deteriorated as the Egyptian leader accused Netanyahu of bad faith over the Hebron talks.

Mubarak emerged from the meeting with Netanyahu optimistic that a common basis for the resumption of talks between Israel and Syria will be ulti-

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Hebron's Shuhada Street to be partially opened to Palestinians today

By JON IMMANUEL and HERB KEINON

Part of Hebron's Shuhada Street is to be opened to Palestinian emergency vehicles, municipal vehicles and taxis on a regular basis from today. This is the first stage in restoring the street to normal use.

The open area will be a one-way, 150-meter section from Gross Square, near the Abraham Avinu Quarter, to the Padesco Gas station and then past Beit Romano toward the market, the IDF said.

In further stages over the next three or four months the rest of the street will be opened to regular traffic and business. It was closed off at both ends after the massacre of 29 Moslem worshippers at the Macpela Cave three years ago generated fears of revenge attacks against settlers.

Military sources said the IDF is considering placing a protective

wall in front of Beit Hadassah and neighboring buildings to maintain their security after that section of the street is opened.

The opening of the street was agreed upon in the original 1995 Hebron guidelines which granted civil administration in all of Hebron to the Palestinian Authority. The principle was reiterated in the revised accord, after protracted talks circumscribed the PA's civil authority in order to strengthen the security of the Jews living there.

Several buildings housing Jews, including Beit Hadassah, Beit Schneerson and Beit Hasson are located on Shuhada Street, renamed King David Street under Israeli rule. The street also links the busy intersection of Bab el-Zawiye, which is under full Palestinian control in H-1, with the Jewish quarter at Abraham Avinu.

The same principle that required the reopening of Shuhada Street

was also invoked in permitting the construction of housing in the casbah area near Avraham Avinu. But last week OC Central Command Maj.-Gen. Uzi Dayan ordered Palestinian construction and renovation work on 122 houses stopped.

The PA said it would ignore the order and demanded it be revoked. "Hebron is one city. H-1 and H-2 are symbols of security control, not of division. If it was divided, then Uzi Dayan could say no one has the right to build without his permission, but it is not divided. I hope he will change his mind," said Ahmed Qurie, speaker of the Palestinian Legislative Council and chief Oslo I negotiator.

Meanwhile, Hebron settlement leaders yesterday decried the decision to open Rehov Shuhada, asking why the road is being opened now, less than a month after the Hebron redeployment agreement, when the agreement gives Israel four months to open the road grad-

ually. "It seems the government is intent on fulfilling their obligations to Arafat, but forgetting their obligations to us, such as ensuring that we can live in security," said settlement spokesman David Wilder.

Hebron settlement head Noam Arnon said a small "token" demonstration against the opening of the road is scheduled for today, and a larger protest action, which he would not spell out, is planned for later in the week.

Hebron settlers have waged an exhaustive campaign for months against the road, saying that opening it to Palestinian traffic will present a security risk, since the road runs immediately in front of the Jewish compounds in the city, and will clog the one artery out of the city that is open to Jewish traffic.

"You can't close us into a ghetto, and then clog up our one street," Arnon said.

Qurie: PA to build legislative council building in Al-Bireh

By JON IMMANUEL

Work is to begin this year on a new building for the Palestinian Legislative Council and \$2 million has been allotted for the project, council speaker Ahmed Qurie said yesterday.

Qurie said the building, in Al-Bireh, would not be the permanent home of the council, which would eventually move to Jerusalem.

He did not rule out the possibility that Al-Bireh, which almost touches the municipal boundaries of Jerusalem, could itself become part of a greater Jerusalem.

"That is something which can be discussed later," he said. But after the permanent status of Jerusalem is decided, he said he expected "the council will be inside the Old City."

The reasoning behind the decision to build a home for the council in Al-Bireh, which forms

one urban unit with Ramallah, is that Ramallah is "an important city also" and it needs a cultural center. When the legislative council vacates it, there will be other uses for the building, he said.

Currently, the council usually meets in Gaza or Ramallah.

In a wide-ranging interview to be published later this week, Qurie said the Palestinians have the right to declare statehood on May 5, 1999, whether or not agreement is reached. That is because the Oslo accords, which he negotiated on the Palestinian side, expressly state the final settlement talks will end by May 4, 1999, "not exceeding five years" from the implementation of the accords in Gaza and Jericho on May 4, 1994.

Qurie said that on the last day of the Oslo negotiations he insisted on inserting those words to make clear there was a firm time limit for the final-settlement talks.

Hoover feared Einstein invented laser gun

By TOM GROSS

A newly compiled list of files and memoranda in the archives of the Federal Bureau of Investigation show just how far the fantasies of its former boss, J. Edgar Hoover, went.

The files, reported in yesterday's London *Sunday Times*, reveal Hoover was under the impression that Albert Einstein had invented an incredible new "laser weapon" which was so powerful that "through it 500 people could rule a nation."

The file cites an "informant's report" which says Einstein and 10 former Nazi research brain-trusters had met in a secret location, where they donned asbestos suits and observed as a beam of light melted down a steel block "as quickly as the light switch in any home could be turned on."

"The atomic bomb," it says, "was little-boy stuff compared to this new development."

The FBI kept a huge file on Einstein which totaled 1,427 pages, according to the recently released

papers. He was reported to have used his home in Germany as a



J. Edgar Hoover

cable address for Soviet agents.

Einstein was not the only celebrity Hoover went to extraordinary lengths to keep tabs on. The files also reveal that instead of spending all their energy fighting organized crime, the FBI amassed intelligence information on such "security threats" as Pablo Picasso—who was denied a visa to enter the US after the Cuban Communist Party used one of his paintings as their emblem—and Marilyn Monroe, who it alleged held "sex parties" with then attorney-general Robert Kennedy. The FBI even intercepted a birthday greeting sent to Picasso by Charlie Chaplin.

The files also show the FBI enlisted celebrities to aid in surveillance operations. Among those who agreed to help were John Wayne, Ernest Hemingway and Elvis Presley.

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Talks at gunpoint

FOLLOWING the deaths of three IDF soldiers in south Lebanon last week, current government plunged ahead with the Hebron deal despite the violent attacks during its watch, and despite its support for linkage. President Ezer Weizman said that Israel "cannot start talking (with Syria) so long as things in Lebanon continue as they are now."

Posh Baka

SUSAN BELLOS
You're being gentrified." I informed Significant Other over breakfast the other day. "Gentrified?" said S.O. "You're nuts. Have you been on a bus lately in Baka?"

Dry Bones



Jacko, who has cancer, is sprawled out on a day bed while Emilie, who has high blood pressure and a heart condition, attempts to divert him by switching on Turkish cable TV. You can see right into Rebecca's too. Like Emilie, she has fluorescent strip lighting, heavy sofas, plastic tablecloths and lace doilies.

Oh, wouldn't it be lovely...

P. DAVID HORNIK
Bipartisanship is in the air. With Labor's Yossi Beilin, the Likud's Michael Eitan and their colleagues having released their bipartisan document on final status issues, it is being said that the Likud, having embraced the Oslo process, is now indistinguishable from Labor.

These issues should be as important to the Left as they are to the right - and not only in themselves. Ultimately, whether or not the Oslo process leads to a more peaceful situation or to a confederation, will depend on the honoring of sensitive agreements involving borders, armies, and weaponry.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

CHRISTIAN SUPPORT
Sir - The Christian leaders of Jerusalem and eastern Israel are showing very clearly who they have chosen to serve and it certainly isn't the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Sadly, too many Christian leaders around the world are not interested in the fact that the Lord they purport to serve is proving His reality and the truth of His word - the Tanach and the New Testament - as He brings back to Israel His Jewish people and establishes them in His land.

DENNIS AND PENNY MCLEOD, Christian Friends of Israel, New Zealand Representatives. Hamilton, New Zealand.

LIBERALISM
Sir - David Gross's article of January 26, "Our liberal elite" makes a very important point about Liberals with a capital "L" and liberals with a small "l".

It seems that any politician who wishes to give extreme or populist views some acceptability has only to use the word "liberal" to make it believable. Liberalism is a political philosophy, which is neither to the right nor to the left of political belief. It has its own specific manifesto, as understood by the world body of Liberalism - The Liberal International. This manifesto, when it is applied to our own society and conditions in Israel, provides specific solutions to our very specific problems.

LIBERALISM IS NOT an expression which can mean anything you want it to mean. Those who do take that view are distorting the meaning of the word. Those politicians, on the right and on the left, who so cynically misuse the word, are misleading their constituency and should be judged accordingly. RONI FORMAN, National Coordinator, Shinui English Section. ANNA LEVIN

...if the Left could overcome its Oslo mysticism and get real?

SUSAN HATTIS ROLEF
Association - the two companies slung mud at each other and flung around charges of disinformation. My own reaction to these (highly uneducational) ads was a hearty rant, even to the Knesset library without being forced to listen to loud and trivial phone talk. This usually goes: "Hi, how are things? Oh, I'm in the supermar-

filling his campaign promise of continuing the Oslo process, albeit more cautiously. It wouldn't mean supporting his every move - for an opposition that would be unnatural. For it would mean respecting him and giving him the benefit of the doubt as he steers the country through a perilous passage. No less important, bipartisanship would also mean depoliticizing the issues involving Arafat. One shouldn't, after all, have to be "right-wing" to express concern about Arafat's failure to extradite terrorists or amend the Palestinian Covenant, as he has promised so often; or to worry about the bloated size of Arafat's "police."

Manics armed with cellular phones

SUSAN HATTIS ROLEF
There's nothing new about boonsness. But its scope has been expanded through the diffusion of cellular phones. A while ago my ex-husband sat in his kitchen having coffee. His cellular phone rang. The caller was the woman he currently lives with. A long, nagging conversation ensued about some errand she wanted done and he was trying to get out of. At the end of it, he lied regarding his whereabouts. Worst of all, he didn't understand why I was upset. He simply couldn't see that even under less delicate circumstances his behavior would have been rude; that his response should have been: "Sorry, I can't talk now - I'll get back to you later."

plague on both your houses." Why encourage the proliferation of such environmental pollution? My views on these audio-nuisances haven't changed since I first wrote about them some three years ago, before Cellocom came onto the market. I complained then about drivers zigzagging along our highways while conducting animated conversations on their cellular phones - a perilous practice that continues despite the current very high fines. Today you can't go to the supermarket, the doctor's, to a restaur-

Ra'anana. Tel Aviv. Jerusalem.

Human F Africa F THE DEMOCRATS

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Human Rites

Africa's Culture War: Old Customs, New Values

By HOWARD W. FRENCH

FOR 16 years, Mark Wisdom, a 54-year-old Baptist preacher and a native Ghanaian, has been waging a lonely campaign to end a form of slavery here as old as the culture of the Ewe peasants inhabiting the dusty villages of this poor corner of Ghana.

Ancient Ewe religious custom holds that for serious offenses like murder, rape and theft, the spirits can be appeased only by the enslavement of young virgins from the offender's family in the shrines of traditional priests. While hardly legal, the bondage of such girls, including their sexual enslavement to the priests, is a custom whose roots run far deeper than the paper-thin veneer of Western law that nominally governs life in this west African nation.

Three hours away in Ghana's modern capital, Accra, responding to recent press reports that have brought the practice of ritual slavery to light, legislators have been debating how to eradicate a custom that may victimize as many as 10,000 girls. But Mr. Wisdom knows better than to expect

On female genital mutilation, the West's hectoring backfires.

much from this; if laws and Government proclamations were enough to truly change the way people live, he said, Africa would already be a much different place.

"Africa's traditions were formed over many generations," he said. "It is not enough to be disgusted with practices like these. It requires very gradual persuasion and lots of patient work to make people change their ways."

Mr. Wisdom's campaign against slavery — not to mention witchcraft, demon worship and ritual sacrifice — is emblematic of a much broader struggle taking place across Africa. Throughout rouch of the continent, from the ritual slavery of the Ewe to female genital mutilation to polygamy, ancient practices that strike both Westerners and many Africans as abhorrent coexist side by side with modernity, and show no sign of imminent abandonment.

The clash between modern values shaped by colonialism and contact with the West and ancestral ones is by no means unique to Africa. In China, for example, the last imperial eunuch only recently died, and in rural villages, elderly women whose feet were bound as infants can still be found, relics of another time. Under the harsh interpretation of Islamic law governing Afghanistan today, criminals are often punished with amputation.

But in Africa, where crushing poverty is more widespread than anywhere else and the inroads of literacy are minimal, many



A 12-year-old girl, given up as a slave to atone for a crime by a member of her family, stands at the beck and call of a traditional priest in Tefie, Ghana.

seemingly anachronistic customs appear destined to die the slowest of deaths. While rationalism and gradual progress are taken for granted in the West, they have very little bearing on views of the world shaping life in much of Africa. Here clinging to the belief that death is the result of evil spells rather than accidents or disease provides comfort in a world where life is short and, for many, brutish still.

There are few better examples of the strong hold of old views than in Sierra Leone, another west African nation, where a small group of women has been working, with little success so far, to end the practice of female genital mutilation.

Female genital mutilation or circumcision involves the excision of the clitoris and the curbing of other genital parts to diminish sexual pleasure and supposedly thus insure

the woman's fidelity to husband and family. While it exists in many African societies, elsewhere on the continent it is usually confined to specific regions or ethnic groups. In Sierra Leone, as many as 90 percent of women are thought to suffer the practice, making it easy to isolate the few who advocate its abolition as a suspect and foreign-influenced fringe.

Defenders of the Ancient

When a newspaper in the capital, Freetown, launched a series of articles against the custom, it became the target of a hostile protest movement by a group of women sworn to defend the rite. Since then, conservative elements in Sierra Leonean society, mostly led by women, have enjoyed great success drumming up support for genital

mutilation, warning against outsiders who seek to impose alien values.

"Almost nothing is happening to stop circumcision," fumed Claudia Anthony, a reporter at the newspaper, For Di People (the name is in the local creole), who has often written on the subject. "No one wants to speak out. People are afraid of taking unpopular measures."

Ms. Anthony's complaint is echoed by frustrated foreign diplomats. "This kind of practice is just plain wrong," one United Nations official in Sierra Leone said. "When are we going to see some Sierra Leonean women, articulate people who have undergone this experience themselves, step forward and condemn it?"

As satisfying as placing a country on an international blacklist might be for some, many Africans who oppose genital mutila-

tion and other traditional rites warn that such a tack would be counterproductive.

"For me, you cannot bring a Western approach, lecturing people about their customs," said Zainab Bangura, a women's rights advocate in Sierra Leone. "The more you decide you are going to take something like this on, the more you are going to face resistance. Instead, a dialogue has to be established, and women here have to understand that Sierra Leone is part of a global community and should not be left out."

Mrs. Bangura said ending female genital mutilation in her country would require an understanding of some of the rituals that surround it, and even rehabilitating them. Traditionally, she said, genital mutilation was the culmination of a months-long retreat

Continued on page 3

Republicans in Transition

Corporate Welfare's New Enemies

By DAVID E. ROSENBAUM

WASHINGTON REPRESENTATIVE JOHN R. KASICH, one of the standard-bearers in the Republican war on the welfare state, tells a story about an encounter he had recently with a business executive in Texas.

The man complained that doing business in Poland might no longer be profitable if Mr. Kasich succeeded in scrapping a Government program that subsidizes companies investing overseas.

Mr. Kasich says he replied: "I remember during the welfare debate when people stood up and said that if we passed these welfare programs, two million children would end up in poverty. You were one of the people who said, 'It's worth the gamble to change welfare.'"

The man nodded. Mr. Kasich continued: "How can you expect me to tell you that I don't want to risk the fact that you may not get a loan that helps your business in Poland?"

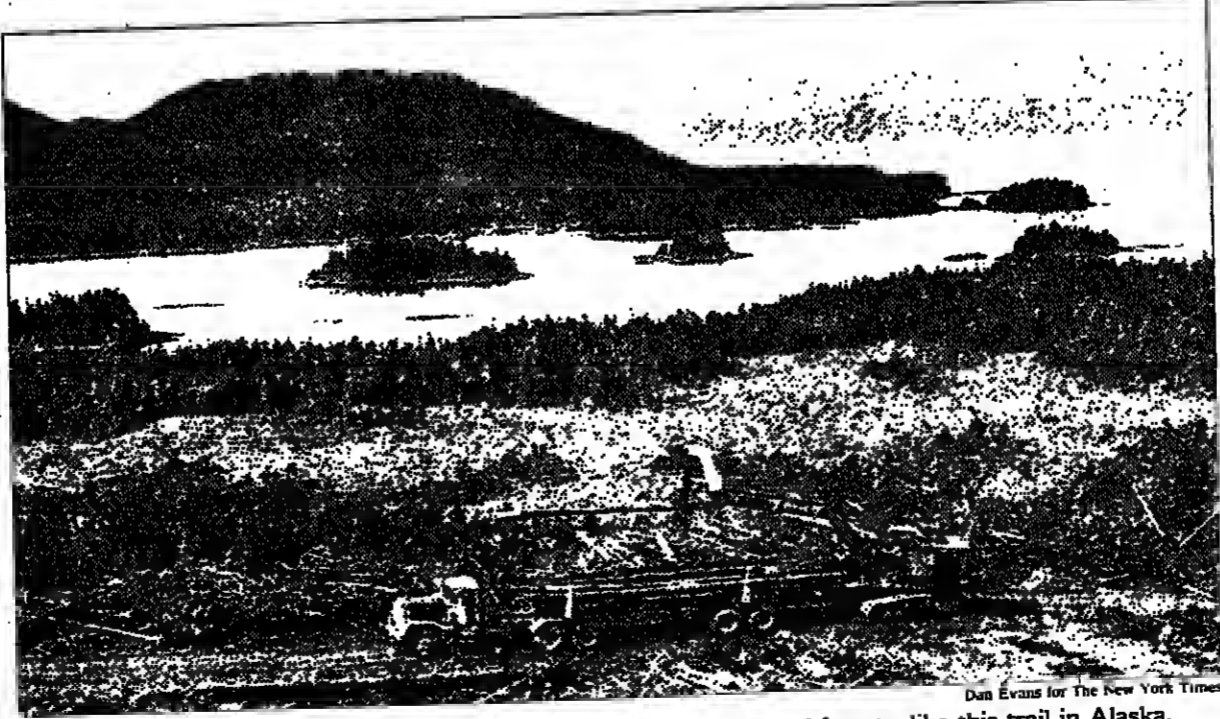
The Democrats' Issue

Mr. Kasich, an Ohioan who is chairman of the House Budget Committee and an acolyte of Speaker Newt Gingrich, is in the vanguard of a band of Republican politicians who want to cast off the idea that the G.O.P. is primarily the party of business and to wrest from Democrats the issue of corporate welfare. Republicans should attack unwarranted Government subsidies with equal zeal, Mr. Kasich is fond of saying, whether the handouts go to people or companies.

President Clinton will doubtless make a similar point this week when he sends his budget to Congress. But Mr. Clinton and Mr. Kasich address the matter from different angles.

The President's budget proposes the elimination of several tax breaks enjoyed mostly by big corporations and investors but leaves intact most of the spending that subsidizes companies. Mr. Kasich skirts the question of tax subsidies for business and concentrates on what the Government spends and lends.

Meanwhile, two of the most prominent partisans in the Senate — John McCain, Republican of Arizona, and



One program nominated for abolition builds logging roads in national forests, like this trail in Alaska.

Edward M. Kennedy, Democrat of Massachusetts — took an intermediate approach last week. They proposed the creation of a commission to study all aspects of corporate subsidies and recommend what should be changed.

The politicians' interest is not mysterious. After Republicans took control of Congress two years ago, Frank Luntz, a Republican pollster, field-tested many words and phrases to assess their political appeal.

"Corporate welfare," he reported, was third on the list of "things the public flips out on," right after "foreign aid" and "waste, fraud and abuse."

The problem is, there is almost no agreement on exactly what constitutes corporate welfare.

A series of articles in The Boston Globe last summer

found programs totaling \$150 billion a year. The Cato Institute, a libertarian research center, recently identified \$87 billion worth.

A study in 1995 by the Congressional Budget Office concluded that the Government spends \$28 billion a year promoting commerce and business and another \$2.2 billion in loan subsidies. The budget office also counted more than 60 tax breaks for specific businesses, 14 of them costing the Treasury annually more than \$1 billion apiece.

As a point of comparison, cuts in entitlement programs for the poor, like Medicaid and welfare, total

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Algeria's Civil War A ruthless military backed government versus often barbaric Islamic guerrillas.

By Roger Cohen

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Biko, in Retrospect Apartheid's Pyrrhic victory.

By John F. Burns

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State of the Oratory The constructing of a Clinton speech.

By Alison Mitchell

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The World

Biko's Case Now Offers Justice From a Travesty

By JOHN F. BURNS

MANY of those who sat in the old synagogue in Pretoria nearly 20 years ago, when it served briefly as one of apartheid's most infamous courtrooms, must have paused at the news from South Africa last week. According to the country's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, five white security officers involved in the detention and killing of the black leader Steve Biko in 1977 have indicated a readiness to admit their part in his death, and began the process of applying for amnesty for their crimes.

South Africa is not the only place where a seemingly impregnable political system has crumbled in recent years. But there can be few places where the victors and the vanquished of the old order meet on such improbably altered terms. Nearly three years of black-led government under the presidency of Nelson Mandela, apartheid's most famous political prisoner, have accustomed the world to surprising things, but few have been quite so arresting as the prospect of learning, from the men who killed him, what really happened to Mr. Biko.

The men who are now petitioners before the truth commission, including Col. Harold Snyman, who oversaw the interrogation of Mr. Biko, showed no remorse 20 years ago at the inquest into his death from brain injuries in a Pretoria prison cell. During the two-week hearing, they strutted about in the manner of men above the law. They juked while waiting to take the witness stand, they openly coordinated their accounts of how Mr. Biko sustained his injuries (and still offered versions that conflicted), and they answered contemptuously when cross-questioned by the Biko family's lawyers.

It is a different matter now. Lawyers for the five men have said their clients are ready to make a clean breast of their roles in Mr. Biko's death, thus meeting, they hope, the condition the truth commission has set for giving amnesty to perpetrators of apartheid-era crimes. Since there is no guarantee that the amnesty will be granted, and thus it is possible that the men could still be prosecuted for murder, it remains to be seen whether they will discard the tissue of evasions, half-truths and

John F. Burns, New Delhi bureau chief of The New York Times, covered South Africa for The Times in 1977.

lies that made absurdist theater of the inquest. But whatever the men may admit or deny, they will be adding in some measure to one of the most important chapters in the fall of apartheid. It was so, in the main, because of the miserable way in which Mr. Biko died, and the shock this administered to opinion in South Africa and the world. But it was also a turning point because it removed a man who many thought might have one day challenged Mr. Mandela for the leadership of blacks in South Africa, or perhaps succeeded him.

WHEN he died, at the age of 30, Mr. Biko was the country's most important young black leader, and something of a firebrand in the anti-apartheid struggle. Only days before his arrest, he told this reporter that blacks would one day move out of their townships and into white suburbs, "destroying and burning" along the way. This appeared to put him and his black-consciousness movement on a more radical track than Mr. Mandela and the African National Congress, the older resistance group now in power. But how much difference this might have made in the compromises Mr. Mandela made with whites to secure black rule can never be known, since Mr. Biko's killers made sure he had no chance to settle into mellow middle age.

What is sure is that Mr. Biko's death speeded apartheid's end. Not since the 1960 police massacre of 62 protesters in Sharpeville had an incident so galvanized black opposition. And because the murder laid bare the viciousness at the heart of white rule, it aroused the West's conscience as nothing before. Within weeks, the United States, turning from dialogue, adopted its first trade and financial sanctions against Pretoria.

Ironically, it was the South African regime's respect for the forms of law — courts, lawyers, open testimony designed to signal that this was still a Western society — that helped expose how deeply it was flouting the core ideas of Western justice itself. Although questioning by the Biko family's lead counsel, Sydney W. Kentridge, devastated the policemen's increasingly fantastic attempts to explain away Mr. Biko's death, the verdict, by a magistrate who was a civil servant within the apartheid regime, was foreordained.

Initially, the Government said that Mr. Biko had



A museum exhibit in Pretoria includes a replica of Steven Biko's body as it was found in his prison cell in September 1977. Five ex-officers are now willing to admit their part in his death in return for amnesty.

starved himself to death. Days later, it adjusted to post-mortem evidence of brain injuries by saying he had intentionally banged his head on a wall. At the inquest, the policemen claimed that Mr. Biko, enraged when shown statements by fellow black leaders that purportedly implicated him in terrorist activities, had attacked them with a chair, then suffered head injuries in a fall.

But none of the shilling accounts disguised the brutal indignities of the affair. At the inquest, the policemen admitted keeping Mr. Biko naked in a cell for 18 days, and denying his transfer to a hospital even after Government doctors detected brain damage. When Mr. Biko was foaming at the mouth and incoherent, he was placed naked in the rear of a Land Rover and driven 700 miles across the country from Port Elizabeth. In Pretoria, he was dumped into a prison cell, still naked, and left to die.

Almost as frightening was the Alice-in-Wonderland world of apartheid the Biko affair exposed. For those at the pinnacle of white power, as much as for those, like the policemen, who did the dirty work necessary to uphold the system, the cost of admitting the truth had become too great, since it involved acknowledging the moral bankruptcy of their power. Instead, they adopted whatever tortured version of reality was least troubling.

Nobody better demonstrated this than James T. Kruger, Justice and Police Minister at the time. It was he who told a congress of the ruling National Party that he supported Mr. Biko's right to "starve himself to death." Later, after Mr. Biko's brain injuries were disclosed, Mr. Kruger summoned this reporter to his office, brewed a pot of tea, walked over to the door frame and banged his head. "This is what he did, just to embarrass us," he said. Farcical as it seemed, Mr. Kruger gave every sign of believing this.

THE fact that the truth has caught up with Mr. Biko's killers may be small consolation to Mr. Biko's family and friends, who have demanded they be tried. Still, the lessons of the affair may give some comfort elsewhere. In Bosnia, victim of another murderous ideology, Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic, the Serbian overlords of "ethnic cleansing" between 1992 and 1995, have been as arrogant in their presumptions of impunity as the practitioners of apartheid ever were. Perhaps, someday, history's wheel will turn for them, too, offering a measure of redress to the numberless victims of their obsessions.

Algeria Is Burning

A Chance to Try to End an Agony

By ROGER COHEN

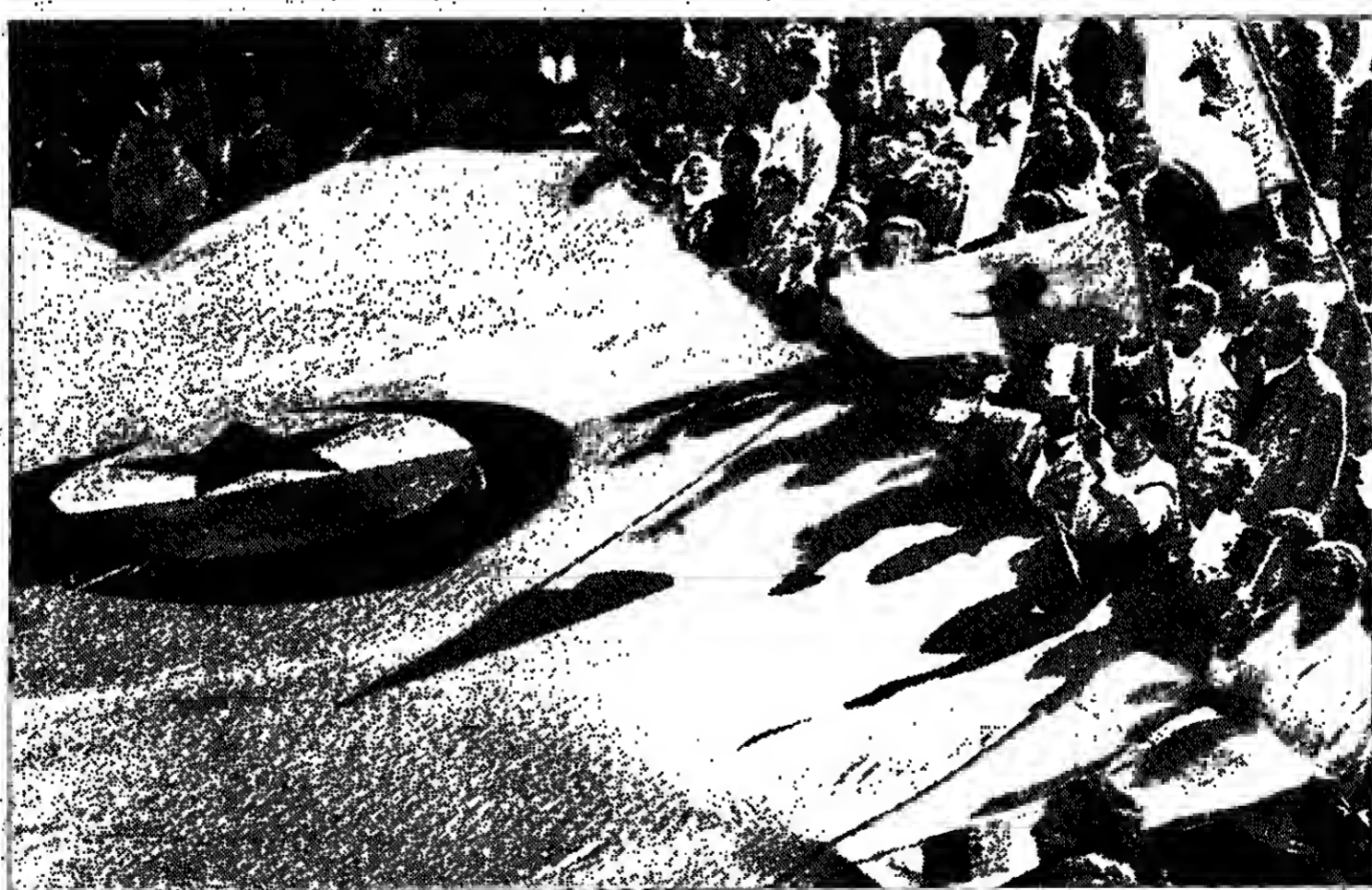
JANUARY was the cruellest month in Algeria. Cruel in its violence, including a car-bombing that killed 42 people in central Algiers; cruel in the cynicism of the assassination of Abdelhak Benhamouda, an influential union leader who had wanted to forge a new political party. And cruel, above all, for the promise of yet more killing that was contained in a ranting speech by the President in which he blamed foreign plots for all of Algeria's woes and vowed to "eradicate" the terrorists.

The Algerian civil war, which pits a ruthless military-backed government against often barbaric Islamic guerrillas, is five years old. It has become part of the background noise of world affairs, rumbling on like Kurdish clashes but rarely registering on the world's consciousness — that is, its television screens.

The conflict began when an election that was on the verge of bringing political Islam to power was canceled by the military in January 1992; it has rendered Algerian democracy — and hopes that a stable political center could form — stillborn.

Hocine Ait Ahmed, an opposition leader, recently spoke of a "Berlin wall" around the war, evoking how the Algerian dreams of the 1980's have died amid general indifference. That wall has been composed of many elements: the secrecy of Algeria's rulers, known simply as "le Pouvoir" or "the Power"; the intractability of a murky conflict; Western diplomatic inertia in a country where the choices appear particularly delicate, and the fact that Algeria's oil and natural gas have kept flowing to American and European companies.

But as the recent violence suggests, the Algerian problem is festering to the point where it may prove harder to ignore. Its threat, just south of France, is clear: spreading Islamic militancy, a spillover of terrorism, a flood of refugees and the disruption of large oil and natural-gas supplies (into which American investment pours).



On Jan. 29, 1995, thousands marched in Algiers to support the Government's promise to hold new elections, which have yet to be held.

A Hint of Opportunity

But if this is a moment of crisis it may also be a moment when the West, whose options seem otherwise limited, could put some pressure on Algeria's leaders to restore a hope of democracy.

Within the next few months, the country is due to hold its first parliamentary elections since the cancellation of the 1992 poll that nearly brought the Islamic Salvation Front to power. The party had brandished slogans like "Islam is the solution" to protest the corruption and economic mismanagement of Algeria's military-dominated regime. When the election was canceled, the party split into armed factions pursuing insurrection and a more moderate wing.

How — and indeed whether — the new elections are held will test Algeria's direction and the West's readiness to encourage a democratic solution there. Breaking a long, and increasingly eerie, silence, French politicians of the left and right last week called for France to act.

Lionel Jospin, the Socialist leader, said France could no longer provide "blind support" to President Liamine Zeroual's Govern-

ment. And Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, a former President, said the Islamic Salvation Front, now banned, should be allowed to participate in the election.

The United States has maintained a determinedly low profile on Algeria since the war began. But tension between America and France over Algeria has been easing. French feelings that the Clinton Administration had been too conciliatory toward the Islamic Salvation Front have changed since the arrest last year of Anwar Raddam, a prominent party member, in America.

So a joint French-American initiative is technically possible, combining French economic leverage over Mr. Zeroual (France grants more than \$1 billion annually to Algeria in subsidized loans) with the Clinton Administration's greater access to the Islamic Salvation Front.

Opening the way for meaningful elections might entail a call on Mr. Zeroual to approach all parties, including the Islamic Salvation Front, in order to hammer out certain principles: the rejection of violence, respect for human rights, the elimination of torture, a commitment to the alternation of power through universal suffrage, a free press and respect for Algeria's Arab and Berber culture, the European Union's aid, debt relief, World Bank loans and the like, could all be used as carrots and sticks.

But huge difficulties remain, all of them illustrated by the events of the last month. Mr. Zeroual's speech on Jan. 24 — in which he raged against "criminals, traitors and mercenaries manipulated by external circles" — was a textbook study in the closed mentality



A bodyguard slain last week along with the labor leader Abdelhak Benhamouda.

reported in Algiers, were, "Kamel, my friend, they have betrayed us." One problem in Algeria is always to know who is killing whom.

These words — and the efficiency of his killing in central Algiers — were widely seen as suggesting that the murder was the work of rival clans within "le Pouvoir," rather than of Islamic guerrillas.

Finally, the barbarity of the car-bombings, throat slittings and other killings that have swept Algiers and towns nearby since the Muslim holy month of Ramadan started on Jan. 10 have illustrated, once again, the unconscionable methods of the violent factions that have splintered from the Islamic Salvation Front. It is unclear to what extent the Front itself — its leaders dead, arrested or abroad — is still a coherent political force.

Still, the frustrated, largely silenced democratic yearnings of a broad Algerian center exist and could be buttressed by Western diplomacy. Those yearnings, and economic frustration, propelled people into the streets of Algiers in the late 1980's to push for democracy, at the same time as people in Central Europe protested against their own dictators and Marxist economic mismanagement.

The Algerian democratic movement went nowhere. The country remains torn by latent ethnic tensions (a Berber minority represents perhaps a third of the population), suffers from decades of official corruption and is unsure what to make of its long French colonial history. It still seeks its true identity. The democratic opening that began in 1988 was largely about finding one. Still today, it appears, as Mr. Jospin said, that "democracy, in the end, is the only road to peace."

Africa's Culture War

Continued From Page 1

into the bush known as Bondo — a sort of finishing school run exclusively by women in which one generation passed on its knowledge of womanhood to the next. Over time, however, such retreats withered into gatherings lasting only a few days, in which traditional teachings faded, leaving the rite of genital mutilation as an exaggerated centerpiece of what was once a rich rite of passage.

"We have to let them know that we are not coming to take something away from them," Mrs. Bangura said. "We could begin by telling women that Bondo has been trivialized by reducing it to a circumcision ceremony. Instead, the institution could be modernized by teaching abstinence or sexual education to young girls."

Then again, different approaches to changing local customs in Africa have been tried across centuries. Competing for converts, many Protestant sects roundly denounced traditional African religious rites as the

Where life has long been bleak, harsh rituals survive.

work of the devil. Roman Catholics, meanwhile, if no less accepting of animist customs, tended to stress their own teachings and spend far less energy castigating Africans for their beliefs.

Looking back at the limited success of either approach, it's not unreasonable to conclude that by itself neither would get very far today. Without education for all and a rise in living standards neither new laws nor angry sermons, like those delivered by Mr. Wisdom at his bamboo-walled church here, will make much difference.

In the Ghanaian coastal village of Tefle, where ritual slavery is still practiced, the wizened men who gather daily in the cooling air of late afternoon seemed to make this point over and over when asked how they felt about a measure being debated in Parliament aimed at wiping out the practice.

"Our customs go back a very long way and they are what we are comfortable with," one said, exasperated by an outsider's questions. "Call us pagans, but we will die happy with the way we are."

The Nation

State of the Speech: Reading Between the Lines

By ALISON MITCHELL

REMEMBER how Bill Clinton electrified a joint session of Congress in 1993 by brandishing a prototype of a national health care card and calling for "health care that can never be taken away, health care that is always there"?

That speech still stands as one of the most impressive formal addresses of his Presidency. And perhaps it was no accident that Mr. Clinton could hold the Congress in his sway even though he was winging it for seven minutes as the wrong text scrolled across the Teleprompter. But he might not be as dramatic Tuesday when he delivers his State of the Union address.

For Mr. Clinton has a curious split personality when it comes to oratory. Speaking extemporaneously, he can be arresting, eloquent and amusing. He has had moments of self-revelation: at a recent news conference, he said that all those officials who had pushed campaign fund-raising to the limits had to be held accountable "even if we did it because we thought we had to do it to survive or to just keep up."

Sometimes his turns of phrase twang with a delicious backwoodsiness. During the campaign, he said of the Republican budget proposal: "It is their dog. And it was a mangy old dog, and that's why I vetoed that dog."



President Clinton about to give his second inaugural address, after making last-minute changes. His informal speeches often are considered more empathetic.

Clinton's most memorable addresses, unlike the State of the Union, are off-the-cuff.

And at the pulpit of a church, Mr. Clinton can burn with a preacher's passion that rivals the Rev. Jesse Jackson's.

But put this President in the most stately settings of government with a written text and a Teleprompter and his eloquence sometimes fades. Connectedness is the key to his best oratory, his aides say. Mr. Clinton needs the synergy of the crowd; he needs to feel people's enthusiasm or their pain.

Without it, his empathy diminishes and his addresses can become less art than architecture, stolid and carefully constructed. This is not for lack of work and resources. These formal addresses go through multiple drafts, with Mr. Clinton scrawling his own words across prepared texts or dictating new ideas to his speechwriters. He reads widely in preparation and takes cues from polls. The result can sometimes be laundry lists of initiatives and too many themes at once. He heeds to predictable adjectives and phrases that exude a comforting optimism but are less than provocative.

Mr. Clinton's inaugural address last month was called workaday by political pundits. He did take risks by warning that the divide of race is "America's constant curse." He also spoke across the years to Ronald Reagan's view on the role of government. "Govern-

ment," Mr. Clinton said, "is not the problem."

But each time the President's speech might have soared, he switched themes, many of which were sounded throughout the campaign. In his wake were would-be catch phrases like a "new government for a new century" or "a land of new promise" or a "bright new prospect in world affairs."

On Tuesday, Mr. Clinton delivers the annual State of the Union Address, which sets out a President's legislative agenda before both Congress and a national television audience. It is regarded as a problematic speech. Thomas Jefferson flatly refused to give one.

"If you imagine political rhetoric as a big broad river like the Mississippi," said Peggy Noonan, one of Mr. Reagan's speechwriters, "an inaugural address is a big sleek sloop, a real dream boat." But a State of the Union, she added, "is a big, old gray tugboat weighed down with cargo. You stop and look at it as it goes by, and sometimes you're marvelously impressed that it didn't sink."

Yet during his first two State of the Union addresses, Mr. Clinton had to his advantage the edge that comes with a new President, the drama of change and his audacious plan for comprehensive health care coverage. He also had a Democratic Congress to cheer him on, which gave him that connection to his audience that evaporated when the Republicans seized control of Congress in 1994.

In 1993, Mr. Clinton scrambled to remake his image

and give the public what it wanted from him. Dick Morris, the President's former political strategist, wrote in his recent book that he conducted a poll with 259 questions in preparation for that State of the Union speech. As a result, Mr. Clinton abandoned his sweeping ideas, adopted smaller, more measured steps and returned to the political center. The 81-minute speech was called wandering by the pundits but pleased the public.

A Bridge That Held

Last year Mr. Clinton showed more confidence; he declared that "the era of big government is over" and sounded the family values themes that became central to his bid for re-election.

Only after the President's 1996 campaign ended did his aides admit how much they sample public opinion in crafting Mr. Clinton's language — acknowledging that they had poll-tested the much-repeated "bridge to the 21st century" to see if the public preferred the phrase over "bridge to the year 2000" or "bridge to the next four years." These techniques may not produce inspirational rhetoric, but apparently they work: Mr. Clinton's recent approval ratings are the highest they have ever been.

Mr. Clinton's aides, preparing for Tuesday, have learned what variables work in his favor. The topic, of course, can make the difference. On an issue that moves Mr. Clinton, like America's racial divisions, he is almost always eloquent. The President is a night person, not an

early riser, and so he is more inspirational in evening speeches. His delivery of a formal speech is better if he has a finished text for several days to practice on in the family theater in the White House.

And only after the President has scribbled widely across the text is he comfortable with it. "The most interesting thing with him and these big speeches," said Mandy Gruenwald, a former media adviser to Mr. Clinton, "is that it isn't until he goes through the process of writing the speech that he knows exactly what he thinks. Some of his best speeches have come because he has really thought through the issue and through the process of writing and rewriting and rewriting he decided what he wants to say."

Still, there are those who long for Mr. Clinton to show the same spark that comes when he is speaking off the cuff. "I would like to see President Clinton, sometime before he's through these four years, demonstrate all his gifts to the maximum," said Mario M. Cuomo, the former New York Governor. "That would require him to throw off any inhibition about saying too much or inhibition about getting into political trouble. I'd love to hear him announcing, 'I'll never run again for public office. I'll never have another chance to tell you what I really believe.'"

As Mr. Clinton crafted his State of the Union message last week, one of his aides daydreamed. "If we were brave at heart," he said, "we would simply give him an outline and say go out there and draw on this."

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FILM

Hollywood Comes to Sundance, in Pursuit of Free Spirits

By CARYN JAMES

AT the Sundance Film Festival, it was hard to walk down the street or negotiate your way through a party without being mowed down by a camera crew. Park City was full of them, but they weren't making movies; they were trying to mint new celebrities.

ABC's "Good Morning America" was trailing Morgan J. Freeman (no relation to the actor), the director of "Hurricane," an adolescent angst movie that went on to tie for this year's Audience Award. MSNBC was following the three partners in October Films, whose non-Sundance movies "Secrets and Lies" and "Breaking the Waves" are contenders for Oscar nominations.

Most ubiquitous was the crew from CBS's "48 Hours," loyally dogging every step of Vin Diesel, a plumped-up New Yorker who wrote, directed and stars in "Strays." At one dizzying moment, CBS was filming Diesel being filmed by the Sundance Channel.

Even the hardest-nosed business people, the distributors who come here prepared to buy movies, now astutely describe this festival in terms of pop-culture celebrity. Their tune is usually stunned, as if visualizing money flying out of their pockets.

"We're turning these guys into instant millionaires; they're like basketball players," Bob Aaronson, an acquisitions executive at 20th Century Fox, said of Sundance film makers. Fox Searchlight paid more than \$2 million for "Star Maps," an improbably funny yet moving film about a Latino would-be actor who sells maps to movie stars' homes and moonlights as a prostitute. As Lindsay Law, president of Fox Searchlight, said, "The film maker is the new rock star."

The irony is: this wasn't a very hot year at Sundance, either for commerce or for art. No matter. Every year a Saint-Vitus's dance sets in; buyers were setting up clandestine screenings, and moviegoers were swarming into theaters like locusts. "Noah Wyle's trying to cut in line," someone said about the actor from "E.R.," who stars in "The Myth of Fingerprints" and was being led through a jammed corridor to see his film.

Among these trappings of fame, no wonder it is now standard to ask, Has Sundance sold out to Hollywood? But a far more pertinent question is, Has Hollywood sold out to Sundance? And as this low-key, course-correcting year proves, beneath the glitz, the Sundance Film Festival (which ended last weekend) has remained remarkably focused on small independent films. Meanwhile the landscape has shifted all around it. Like the mountain going to Mohammed, Hollywood has expanded its range of vision to include the ideals that Sundance has long been fostering.

Even with your eyes closed, it's not easy to confuse Rod Steiger with Robert Redford. Yet when Mr. Steiger stood on stage at the Golden Globe Awards recently, his words sounded eerily like those Mr. Redford had been saying for years. "They're called independent films because of their financing, but they're independent because of their spirit," Mr. Steiger said, presenting a clip from "Breaking the Waves," nominated for best drama. His words (in a ceremony televised on NBC, as mainstream as movie-gazing gets) suggest the direct link between Hollywood and Park City. In part because of the Sundance Film Festival's influence, Hollywood has embraced independent films as never before.

Eight years ago, when "Sex, Lies



Douglas Spain in "Star Maps" — Funny and snapped up.

and Videotape" became the first commercial hit out of the festival, the movie was separated into gargantuan studio films and tiny, shoestring works. Since then, a huge middle ground has emerged, a gray area composed of major independent companies — like Miramax, Sony Pictures Classics, Fine Line, October, Gramercy and Fox Searchlight — releasing films like "The English Patient" and "Shine."

"The independent world has staked out a turf," says Geoffrey Gilmore, Sundance's programming director. "You can't say that film is either commercial or low-end now. There are a lot of models out there for how to make independent films."

And at the low end of the scale, almost anyone can get into the game. Investors have found that a movie made for less than \$2 million will probably break even if there are some shrewd foreign, video and television sales. Practical factors as different as improved technology and New York union contracts that give breaks to independents have contributed to the glut of films at this festival and in the marketplace.

Sundance's crucial role in this equation has been to raise the profile and expectations for independent movies. "Six years ago at this festival, there would have been a lot of debate about whether any of these films had commercial potential," Mr. Gilmore says. Now the debate is about how much potential they have.

But that development cuts two ways. It is easier for a new film maker to create a movie, and ever harder to find a distributor. As L. M. K. Carson (who acts in and is a producer of "Hurricane") points out with a bluntness that is refreshing in this atmosphere of sensitive plants, there is also an unfortunate side to that trend: "It leads people to think their dog can direct a movie." For every "Shine," which is a success, there is a "Spitfire Grill," which sold at Sundance last year for a calamitously overpriced \$10 million. That price took what might have been a modest success and turned it into a major commercial failure.

Still, directors come here inspired by the Sundance fairy tale and by films like "The Brothers McMullen," which made Edward Burns a name director. "People are thinking, 'I can do that. I can win Loto!'" said Robert Bell, a first-time director whose "Colin Fitz" was in the dramatic competition. He didn't win Loto or a prize, but he did direct a deftly amusing dark comedy about security guards protecting the grave of a rock star. His wit was a relief in a year more loaded than usual with coming-of-age stories.

That's another deadening aspect of the independent explosion: every young film maker has a sexual awakening story. They blend together even though every possible variation was represented here, homosexual in the amateurish "Delta," heterosexual in the slight but charming "Mary Jane's Not a Virgin Anymore," lesbian in the vibrantly shot

and acted "All Over Me." The only thing missing was "Babe's Not a Virgin Anymore" with pigs and dogs.

The relative lack of daring in this year's films is dynamic proof that just because you can make a movie, doesn't mean you should. Vin Diesel became one of this year's object lessons. "Strays," a rambling, distant relation of "Mean Streets" in which tough guys learn to love their moms, was almost universally considered one of the low points of the festival.

There was, in fact, so much carping about weak selections this year that Robert Redford himself made a snarky comment in retaliation. After three feet of snow fell at his Sundance resort on Saturday, he was unable to get down the mountain to the awards ceremony in Park City. He sent a statement to be read, which included a line presumably in defense of Mr. Gilmore's much criticized program. "Please don't shoot the messenger," Mr. Redford wrote. "There are enough critics trying to do that."

There's no need for Sundance or Mr. Redford to be so defensive, or for buyers to be so unrealistic. After all, how often does a John Sayles or a David Lynch come along, establishing careers that viewers will want to follow for decades? How often does a "Shine" strike gold?

There were, instead, plenty of films here that help define what good independent film making is about. "The Myth of Fingerprints," an engaging and subtle family drama directed by Barr Freundlich, blurs the line between Hollywood and Sundance. It has recognizable stars, including Blythe Danner, Roy Scheider and Julianne Moore. Yet Mr. Wyle, playing one of several siblings who return home for Thanksgiving, is at the center of a father-son conflict that beautifully avoids a predictable Hollywood ending.

Over lunch, Mr. Wyle sounded smart about his own career and about what makes an independent film independent. He could have parlayed his television success into a role in the Hollywood film, but he's aware that the cast of "Friends" have bombed out in movies that way.

"I knew that a low-budget independent family drama was probably the best thing I could do, for my own sanity and professionally," he said. "Independent film has now taken on the air of quality. I wanted to structure my career to insure as much longevity as possible."

And he points out differences between the realism of "The Myth of Fingerprints" and a Hollywood melodrama. "If this were a studio film, I wouldn't have pushed my father into a table, I would have beat him up. My father wouldn't have kissed my girlfriend; he would have raped her." Because the film came to Sundance with a distributor, Sony Pictures Classics, it was one of the few polished movies in competition, something even other distributors could admire.

"There was not an ounce of fat on 'Myth of Fingerprints,'" said Mr. Law of Fox Searchlight. "Every year film makers stand up and say, 'We just finished the film; you're the first audience to see it, and I want to say, 'Don't do it! This is no place for a dress rehearsal anymore.'"

True to its purpose, the festival has balanced smooth films with edgy work, including "Star Maps" (shown out of competition) and "In the Company of Men," a tiny social comedy about two men who hatch a nasty plot to seduce and humiliate a deaf woman, retaliating for years of abuse by females. People here argued about whether it was misogynistic or male-bashing, but both extremes seem wrongheaded. One man is a sociopath, the other a wimp.

Because of its provocative subject, "In the Company of Men" at least got some attention. As the festival grows, and distributors prowl for commercial prospects, the danger is that less flamboyant films will get lost. A slow, lovely film like "The Whole Wide World," which was in last year's festival (and is in theaters now), got scarcely any attention here. That hints at the scary notion that Sundance audiences may be as impatient as any others.

Hardly anybody talked about this year's Grand Jury winner, "Sunday," which deserved its prize. The film creates an elegant maze in which a middle-aged man living in a shelter in Queens is mistaken for a middle-aged actress for a famous director. Or is she mistaken after all? David Suchet, usually seen as the impeccable Hercule Poirot on PBS's "Mystery," becomes this credit-troubled man with complete credibility, and the film creates a playful mirror world even while examining the realistic texture of diminished lives and expectations.

Directed by Jonathan Nossiter and written by him and James Ladd, "Sunday" was the odd film out among so many kiddie flicks. "This is a good film that would be dead without winning," said John Powers, the film critic for Vogue magazine and a member of this year's jury. "Now it has a chance to find the audience it deserves."

Distributors are now circling around "Sunday," but the festival is



"Sunday," starring David Suchet and Lisa Harrow, won Sundance's Grand Jury prize.

littered with the remains of Grand Jury winners that never found an audience. Do "Chameleon Street" or "Public Access" sound familiar? Of course not. The Audience Award is usually the better harbinger of mainstream interest. "Hurricane" shared the prize with the romance "Love Jones" (which came to Sundance with New Line as its distributor). "Hurricane" is not nearly as rich as "Sunday," but it has a more viewer-friendly surface. Essentially it is one more variation on the coming-of-age film, in which a 15-year-old New York boy, being brought up by his grandmother while his mother is in prison, becomes carelessly involved in petty crime.

While the competition films disappointed buyers hoping to find Hollywood's next flavor of the month, Mr. Lynch's "Lost Highway" is a film with enough glossy production values for Hollywood, enough enigmatic content for Park City, and enough artistry to explode all categories. To say it is a murder mystery without a solution is merely to hint at its many swerves and layers, as Bill Pullman plays a man accused of murdering his wife, played by Patricia Arquette. All the elements of film mak-

ing come together as they could in no other form: haunting visual images, a story that has the thrust of film noir, an eclectic jazz-and-pop score.

So many things in life are abstracted, and cinema has a way of dealing with that," Mr. Lynch said, adding that the film, which includes a mysterious transformation from one personality to another, "is not always intellectually understandable; it's an intuitive sort of understanding. People have to feel their way through." The remark makes sense coming from a man who started out as a painter and who resists describing "Lost Highway." As he said, in a voice that is remarkably tiny coming from such a tall man: "If you could say those 2 hours and 15 minutes in words, that would be beautiful, but usually the words fail."

If David Lynch is the epitome of a daring independent, the kind of film maker Sundance helps and hopes to breed, Steven Soderbergh has been the Sundance poster boy ever since "Sex, Lies and Videotape." Yet this year he brought a new film literally across the street, to Slamdance, the rival festival that was started three

years ago by film makers turned away from Sundance. There, the audience sits on folding chairs and some lie on sofa cushions on the floor. The existence of Slamdance is proof of how establishment Sundance has become.

Mr. Soderbergh's unexpectedly funny and strange "Schizopolis" is a screwball comedy about language and how it falls apart. The director himself stars in a deadpan role as a corporate executive who switches lives with a dentist and occasionally speaks gibberish. In an introduction, added recently to help loosen up the audience and prove "this isn't some pretentious treatise," Mr. Soderbergh offers the droll commentary that all of civilization rests on the acceptance of his film.

Mr. Redford has called Slamdance a parasite feeding off Sundance, which of course it is. Sundance's attitude toward Slamdance seems to be "This town's not big enough for both of us." Actually, as Sundance grows, it's hardly big enough for one of them anymore. But don't expect Sundance to move to Hollywood; it has done an amazing job of luring Hollywood in the direction of Park City.

COLLEGE CATALOGUE

BY RICHARD SILVESTRI / EDITED BY WILL SHORTZ

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down.

Answers to crossword puzzle clues.

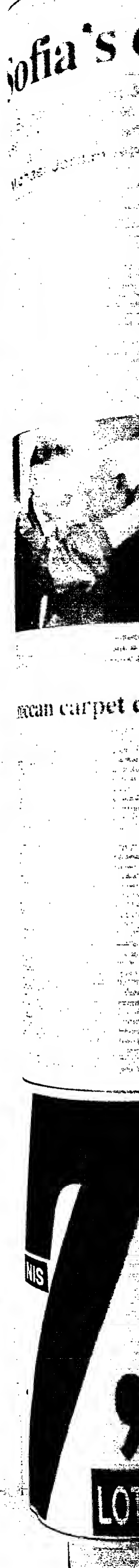
ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

Grid of answers from the previous puzzle.



Patricia Arquette in David Lynch's "Lost Highway" — Enigmatic.

Handwritten Arabic text: "سنة 1997"



Sofia's choice

While Bulgaria's young Jews are emigrating because of dire economic conditions, the aged are staying - and in need.
Michael Jordan reports from Sofia

Mordo Ishak Almozino has survived three wars and four decades of communism. But this 90-year-old Bulgarian Jew says he's stunned by the magnitude of his country's current economic crisis. Inflation may have topped 50 percent for January alone. Average salaries have plummeted to \$25 per month, while pensioners receive roughly \$10. That's equal to about one loaf of bread per day. In desperation, scores of elderly resort to scavenging for food in garbage bins. Almozino might have been among them, if it weren't for the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee. The JDC has responded to Bulgaria's worsening economic crisis by chipping in nearly \$20 per month for food

and heating for each of 1,400 Holocaust survivors. "I would die without it," said Almozino, a retired bookkeeper whose great-grandfather was Bulgaria's first chief rabbi. "Man's greatest enemies are the cold and hunger." While Almozino and others tough it out and vent their frustrations - for more than two weeks, tens of thousands have demonstrated nationwide against the ruling Socialists - a growing portion of younger Bulgarian Jews are jumping ship. Their lifeboat: Israel. Bulgaria is said to have the highest rate of Jewish emigration in the world. Some 1,000, of an estimated community of 7,000, have left for Israel since the Iron Curtain was torn down in 1989. And the

pace has picked up since July, mirroring the country's rapid economic decline. Twenty to 35 Jews depart each month, with a total of 300 to 400 predicted to head out this year, said Ori Konforti, director of the Jewish Agency for Israel in Sofia. "It used to be that Bulgarian Jews left for work opportunities or Zionism, but now it's purely for economic reasons," Konforti said. He added that the agency has also rejected hundreds of Bulgarian applicants who posed as Jews in order to escape the economic crisis. Unlike elsewhere in Eastern and Central Europe, antisemitism in Bulgaria is virtually a non-factor when considering emigration. This Balkan nation, where Jews trace their roots back to the second century CE, has been relatively good to the mostly Sephardi community. Though Bulgarians were allied with the Nazis and imposed several anti-Jewish laws, they ultimately protected their 50,000 Jews.



Albert Havdala, assistant editor of the 'Jewish News,' the only Bulgarian-language newspaper of its kind. After the communists took power in 1948, the newspaper was allowed to continue under state control. (Doron Bacher/ Courtesy of Beth Hatefesoeth)



In Sofia, family members say farewell to relatives prior to aliyah. Bulgaria is said to have the highest rate of Jewish emigration in the world. (Doron Bacher/ Courtesy of Beth Hatefesoeth)

Bulgarians outside the country were another story, however. Bulgarian gendarmes operating in territory newly recovered from Macedonia and Greece rounded up and deported more than 11,000 Jews to Polish extermination camps. But when the communists took power in 1948, the Bulgarians allowed nearly 45,000 Jews to emigrate to Israel over a two-year period. The remaining Jews, like all Bulgarians, saw their private and communal property nationalized (about half has since been returned) and were discouraged from practicing religion. However, Sofia's main synagogue stayed open and the Bulgarian-language Jewish newspaper continued publishing, albeit under state control.

Today there is something of a community revival underway, despite the dwindling populace. Bulgarian Jews now operate their own grammar school, Sunday school and camps, thanks to individual and foreign donors like the JDC, the London-based World Jewish Relief, and the Jewish Community of Thessalonika, Greece. They've also restored Sofia's 88-year-old Sephardi synagogue. Last year the JDC also donated to the general population of 8.4 million Bulgarians, supplying nearly \$300,000 worth of medicine, baby formula and powdered milk to old-age homes and orphanages. Aside from picking up the slack for a cash-strapped government, the

charity was an investment of sorts. History has shown that where there's economic despair, Jews are traditionally fingered for blame, said Becca Lazarova, vice president of the Organization of Jews in Bulgaria. "If help only comes for Bulgarian Jews, and it becomes publicly known to other Bulgarians, there could be a wave of antisemitism," Lazarova said. "They can't understand why Jews from around the world are helping us, because there's no foreign policy regarding the Bulgarian diaspora." Community leaders also have their eye on other troubling developments. Within the increasingly popular political opposition, a coalition called the United Democratic Forces, there is a

small, right-wing faction that declares itself heir to the fascist World War II-era Bulgarian Legionnaires. And a recent article in a trade-union newspaper claimed that Israeli scientists had hatched the HIV virus to decimate the globe's population, paving the way for Jews to rule the world. Fortunately, Jewish community leaders note, Jews are practically invisible in Bulgaria's economic and political life. On the other hand, they remain a potent presence in science, academia and the arts. In fact, Bulgarian Jew Isak Passi, a philosopher, has been nominated for a 1997 Nobel prize. Still, with the economic tailspin only gaining speed, Jewish leaders also expect the "brain drain" and

graying of its population to continue. Eighty-five percent of the Israel-bound emigrants are highly educated and between the ages of 17 and 45, Konforti said. Some Bulgarian Jews, though, choose to ignore the bleak forecasts. Martin Cohen, 25, emigrated to Israel six years ago. But when he returned to Bulgaria in 1994, he was startled. "In Israel there's no need to preserve your Jewishness because there are Jews all around you; here we need to preserve our identity," said Cohen, who recently translated the Sabbath prayer book into Bulgarian and coordinated the country's B'nai Brith Youth Organization. "So whereas in Israel I was an Israeli, it was in Bulgaria I became a Jew."

Moroccan carpet co-op seeks to liberate women

The 20 women in the southern Moroccan village of Sidi Mokhtar, 100 km from the walled city of Marrakesh, are packed in a small room, cheerfully making carpets on eight weaving looms. Their project started after a woman from the region, Fatima-Zohra Tamoh, who is teaching African history at Rabat University, thought a way was needed to help women earn their living and stop relying on a man for their existence. "I thought of making them realize their fate lay in their hands," she said. It took her a long time to persuade the women that working in a cooperative would not demean them or raise their community's hostility. "The idea of working in a cooperative has a pejorative connotation. Only very poor people normally go there. I had to rely on friends and relatives to organize meetings with women to explain the way we wanted to work," she said. Not only local prejudice caused problems. Foreign buyers shunned Moroccan carpets after reports that little girls as young as six and seven often worked in appalling conditions, falling ill with rheumatism and pneumonia. "They often stood all day before a loom and earned only 60 dirhams [about \$7] a month," said Tamoh. "When I started three years ago, the women were very reluctant and I had to meet them more than 10 times before they agreed. Even then, some did not turn up the day we decided to start working but others replaced them." But there are still taboos over married women working and divorced ones are also fei-

tered by prejudices. The workers are all unmarried women at present. But the work has given them impetus for other things, said Tamoh. "About 67 percent of Moroccan women are illiterate, with the worst rate being in the countryside. The Education Ministry, trying to eradicate this, offers lessons which Tamoh's women took. "Being illiterate, this new activity triggered their willingness to learn writing and reading and they got their first identity cards," she said. "If we had more support and we could find export markets, we think of giving education on health, family planning, and open a kindergarten to encourage married women to work." Morocco's carpet industry, which has 45 cooperatives, has been hit by both the child labor row and poor quality. Carpet exports fell to 274.4 million dirhams in 1995 from 393.4 million in 1985, the Handicrafts Ministry said. "The government has moved to prevent children's labor but the decline in carpets is also due to the fact that German importers lost confidence in local producers who often bypassed them to make deals with retailers," a spokesman added, describing the Germans as the "bourse" of the carpet world. Tamoh blames both local producers and the authorities for the decline in quality. "It was first made of pure wool but gradually, with lax control of the authorities, it has come out with mixed products which have been avoided by foreigners." She insists on only pure wool being used in the cooperative which produces about 30 carpets a month, with four women taking about 20

days to produce a medium-sized carpet, three meters long and two meters wide. Each region has its own model, with carpets from Rabat's region and the Atlas Mountains the most popular. They sell for between 2,400 and 8,000 dirhams, but with workshop rent, electricity charges and wool, little is left. The women each get about 600 dirhams a month in pay. "So far we have only local buyers but they are not numerous. We have to organize exhibitions to make our products known and this also costs money." The ministry official said locally produced carpets were subject to control, being stamped in official categories ranging from extra superior, to superior, good and ordinary. "The good quality depends on the material used and also the number of knots per meter square, the color must stand the washing, the more knots there are per meter square, the better the quality is," he said. Extra superior quality costs between 800 and 2,000 dirhams per square meter and a superior one between 400 and 700 dirhams. Tamoh wants to prove Moroccan carpets can meet international quality standards and to help Moroccan women. She is an active member of a women's union which initiated the project, and said the women were now looking at setting up a fund to grant small loans to the neediest of them. "They already lend small sums to women," she said, "but once they have working capital, it will be possible to lend bigger amounts to the poorest people." (Reuters)

EARTHLY CONCERNS

Poverty plus starvation equals a vicious downward cycle

By D'VORA BEN SHAUL

Can there be a second "green revolution" in worldwide agriculture? And can it save the world from starvation? Many agronomists believe that there can be an effective revolution that will boost world food production and that this will make up for the rapid increase of the number of people to be fed. These agronomists believe that more fertilizers are the answer to the world's food problems. But Lester Brown, president of Worldwatch, a Washington-based environmental information service, believes otherwise. Brown, who was a part of the "green revolution" of the '60s that doubled worldwide food production, says that there cannot be a second such success story. Brown points out that not only have populations risen at an unprecedented rate but that we are running out of arable land and water for irrigation. Moreover, he says, most countries that would reap the benefits

of drastically increased food production are simply not economically able to afford the amount of fertilizers needed to make such a program possible. American and Canadian farmers use from 100 to 500 kilograms of nitrogen per hectare in order to get the bumper crops they usually enjoy. But in Asia, despite the much lauded "green revolution" only 30 kgs per hectare are used, in Latin America 15 kgs and in Africa only 4 kgs. Even this, says Brown, makes crop production too expensive to be available to the poorer people of the world and despite potential yields crops remain poor and, indeed, inadequate. There 800 million people in the world who are chronically undernourished and 200 million of them are under five years old. One-seventh of the people in the world do not have access to the available grain stores in any case because they are too impoverished to buy food. In an ideal world this would not happen, but the facts are that a second revolution would produce

a glut of food in Kansas but in Katmandu people would still starve because they lack the means to purchase either the fertilizers and water to grow food or the money to buy from the surpluses produced elsewhere. Although lip service is paid by most major organizations to the idea of sustainable agricultural self-sufficiency, Brown points out that in some areas the soil is so poor, the droughts so severe and the poverty so great that the people who live there are starving even in a world where food surpluses abound. It is poverty, not food scarcity that dooms these millions to starvation, says Brown. What we need is a world program against poverty because it simply doesn't matter how much food is grown in the world if many people have no access to it. Exactly how such a program could be implemented is not clear, but it seems fairly sure that unless there is such a program millions more will starve to death in the coming decade.

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Maccabi TA blasts into hoop State Cup semis

By ELI GRONER Last night's second leg of the State Cup semifinals featured little excitement and no surprises. Maccabi Tel Aviv and Kiryat Motzkin completed sweeps, while Maccabi Ramat Gan went into cruise control against Holon, with the aggregate victory assured. The trio will be joined in the semifinals by either Hapoel Jerusalem or Bnei Herzliya. The semifinals will take place on March 20.

Shearer's 3 saves Magpies

NEWCASTLE (AP) - Three late goals by England striker Alan Shearer - the last one three minutes into injury time - scrambled a 4-3 victory for Newcastle Sunday after Leicester had threatened an upset win at St James Park. The visitor led 3-1 with 13 minutes to go before Shearer scored his trio to take his total for the season to 23.



NET GAINS - Alan Shearer celebrates after scoring his third goal against Leicester yesterday. Newcastle won 4-3.

has invited 25 sports officials from UEFA and around the world to discuss its bid over lunch at 10 Downing Street February 12. That's the day England hosts Italy in a World Cup group two game at Wembley. England is preparing a £10 million bid to stage the finals in opposition to Germany's candidature, which was made earlier. South Africa and South American nations are also interested in hosting the 2006 World Cup and FIFA, soccer's world governing body, will decide in June 2000.

Hill's 4th triple-double wins for Pistons

EAST RUTHERFORD (AP) - Grant Hill had his fourth triple-double of the season with 22 points, 11 assists and 11 rebounds as the Detroit Pistons won their fifth straight game, 90-75 over the New Jersey Nets on Saturday. It was the 15th triple-double of Hill's career and his third against the Nets. He shot 7-of-14 from the field and 8-for-8 from the line, and grabbed all of his rebounds on the defensive end.

TOKYO (Reuters) - An injured Steffi Graf pulled out of the "dream final" of the Pan Pacific indoor tennis tournament here yesterday adding to woes that have already turned 1997 into a jinx year. Graf, the world's top ranked woman player, withdrew with an injured left knee about an hour before the scheduled start of her much-anticipated match against teenage sensation Martina Hingis of Switzerland, the world No. 2.

Injury sidelines Graf in showdown with Hingis

TOKYO (Reuters) - An injured Steffi Graf pulled out of the "dream final" of the Pan Pacific indoor tennis tournament here yesterday adding to woes that have already turned 1997 into a jinx year. Graf, the world's top ranked woman player, withdrew with an injured left knee about an hour before the scheduled start of her much-anticipated match against teenage sensation Martina Hingis of Switzerland, the world No. 2.

Martin said it would be several days before doctors could determine the extent of the injury. "This type of injury can clear up in a week or two or sometimes can take longer," Martin said. Graf plans to return to Germany immediately. "I just hope it's not very serious," the 26-year-old Graf said. "I hope we can calm it down pretty soon."

Lemieux at 599

PITTSBURGH (AP) - Mario Lemieux scored the 598th and 599th goals of his career in the first period and the Pittsburgh Penguins, slumping since going unbeaten in 14 games, defeated the Phoenix Coyotes 4-1 on Saturday. Lemieux, expected to retire after this season, needs one goal to become the seventh player in NHL history to score 600 goals and the fifth with 600 goals and 600 assists.

by stopping 25 shots in Detroit's away victory. Vernon is 16-1-1 in his career vs. the Blues with a 1.89 goals-against average. Playing his fifth straight game since Chris Osgood went down with a hamstring strain, Vernon allowed only Brett Hull's 29th goal. Rangers 4, Flyers 2. Niklas Sundstrom had a goal and an assist and Mike Richter made 39 saves as visiting New York won.

CLASSIFIEDS

CLASSIFIEDS - RATES, HOUSE SITTING, RENTALS, SALES, SITUATIONS VACANT, HOUSEHOLD HELP, DWELLINGS, RENTALS, FLAT MATE

CLASSIFIEDS - OFFICE STAFF, COMMUNICATIONS COMPANY, SALES PERSONNEL, SITUATIONS VACANT, HOUSEHOLD HELP, VEHICLES, PASSPORT, UNRESTRICTED

Lara finds his form with unbeaten 103. PERTH (Reuters) - Brian Lara finally broke through to score his first century in the series as West Indies built a formidable reply to Australia's first innings 243 in the fifth and final Test yesterday. The West Indies vice-captain and number four batsman was rewarded for his patience with an unbeaten 103 that lifted his side out of trouble and into a position of strength in partnership with opener Robert Samuels.

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WHAT'S ON

CRITIC'S CHOICE

LIGHT THEATER

HELEN KAYE

Modest Gil Aldema will be the center of attention at the celebration honoring his 50 years of musical output...



Cultural events from chamber music (above) to food culture will be covered on 'A Different Drummer'...

CLASSICAL MUSIC

MICHAEL AJZENSTADT

Giuseppe Sinopoli, one of the leading opera conductors of our generation, leads the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra in three performances of Puccini's all-time favorite...

TELEVISION

ELANA CHIPMAN

A Different Drummer is a new live cultural news program edited and hosted by David...

TV

- CHANNEL 1
6:30 News flash
6:51 News in Arabic
6:45 Good Morning, Israel

- CHANNEL 2
6:15 Today's Programs
6:30 Shekay and Givon

- CHANNEL 3
6:15 Today's Programs
6:30 Shekay and Givon

- JERUSALEM CINEMATHEQUE
6:15 The Virgin Spring
6:45 The Broken Arrows

LIVE

- 15:30 The Nanny
16:00 Hercules
16:45 Zingara, part 2

- 17:30 New York Daze
18:00 One Life to Live
18:45 The Young and the Restless

- 19:00 The Nanny
19:30 The Young and the Restless
20:00 The Young and the Restless

- 20:00 The Young and the Restless
20:30 The Young and the Restless
21:00 The Young and the Restless

PRIME TIME TV

Table with 8 columns (1-8) and 4 rows (19:30-23:30) listing TV programs like News flash, Local broadcast, Bottle, etc.

17:30 Shesh-Tus
18:00 Hugo
18:30 Loomy Toons

19:00 Little Mouse on the Prairie
19:30 Bottle
20:00 Rock's Modern Life and Ren & Stimpy

20:00 Vincent, Francois, Paul and the Others
20:30 Vincent, Francois, Paul and the Others

21:00 Vincent, Francois, Paul and the Others
21:30 Vincent, Francois, Paul and the Others

22:00 Vincent, Francois, Paul and the Others
22:30 Vincent, Francois, Paul and the Others



CRYPTIC CROSSWORD

- ACROSS
6 Stand on your head and relax (3,4,4,2)
8 One with an inclination to pay a bit more for service? (6)

Cryptic crossword puzzle grid with clues and solutions.

Quick crossword puzzle grid with clues and solutions.

SOLUTIONS

Yesterday's Quick Solution
ACROSS: 1 Inner, 4 Bears, 10 Bughen...

MOVIES

Breaking the Waves 6:45, 9:15 * La Ceremonie 7:15, 9:30
ATZMON First Wives Club 4:45, 7:15, 9:45 * Daylight 4:45, 7:15, 9:45

Kessar testifies in Yisraelovich case

Testimony supports accused

By RAINIE MARCUS

Former transportation minister Yisrael Kessar testified for the prosecution against Artur Yisraelovich in the Histadrut fraud affair in Tel Aviv Magistrate's Court yesterday.

Yisraelovich was charged last year on five counts of theft, fraud and breach of trust, arising from his management of Kessar's 1992 Labor Party Knesset primary campaign, while the latter was the Histadrut's secretary-general. Although Yisraelovich, who was the Histadrut treasurer at the time, was not officially responsible for Kessar's campaign, he was de facto in charge of finances and had complete control of all income and expenses.

Yisraelovich is charged with asking Uzi Fassas (who later turned State's Witness in the case) to forge invoices to charge different Histadrut departments instead of directly charging Kessar's campaign division. He is also accused of paying over NIS 500,000 of Histadrut funds to two private investigators to organize surveillance on Haim Ranon, who ran in



Yisrael Kessar (Israel Sun)

the Histadrut elections in 1994 against Kessar. Kessar also was questioned in the affair, but was never charged.

Although he appeared as a prosecution witness yesterday, his testimony supported Yisraelovich's denial of all charges.

"This is my first time in a court room," an excited Kessar said. "I

have [full] faith in Yisraelovich."

During his testimony, Kessar said that he had asked Yisraelovich and Avigdor Kahalani (who was at the time the head of the Amal trade schools) to take care of his campaign's finances.

"Since I had not dealt with financial affairs for a long time, I trusted Artur as I would myself... I had worked with him for 26 years... and had never had a doubt that he would be involved in anything illegal, or what we would call improper management."

Kessar added that he was too busy to deal with gathering contributions for his campaign and left Yisraelovich in charge.

"I know that the accused is charged with offenses relating to my 1992 primaries," Kessar continued. "I cannot and will not believe any allegations, because I know him [Yisraelovich] for 27 years. But it was known that some of the party did not like him. I told the police that Artur would have to be stupid to do anything when he knew that certain people were out for his blood."

Schach admitted to intensive care

By JUDY SIEGEL

Ninety-nine-year-old Rabbi Eliezer Menahem Schach was admitted yesterday to Ichilov Hospital's intensive care unit and attached to a respirator after complaining of breathing difficulties.

The spiritual leader of Lithuanian haredim had earlier been rushed from his Bnei Brak home to the nearby Mayanei Hayeshua Hospital, which received special equipment from Ichilov and Assaf Harofeh Hospital to treat him.

He had lost consciousness for a short time, according to MK Avraham Ravitz (United Torah Judaism), and had developed a high fever, causing his son, Prof. Ephraim Schach, to rush to his home.

Ichilov spokeswoman Aviva Shemer said the breathing problems were due to complications of pneumonia that the aged rabbi had suffered a few months ago. After treatment, Schach was in stable condition, Shemer said.

She could not say when he would be discharged.



Rabbi Schach (Israel Sun)

When students at Bnei Brak's Ponevezh Yeshiva, which Schach headed until recently, heard of his illness, they began to recite Psalms.

Some took upon themselves a "word fast" (to refrain from non-holy speech).

PM candidacy bill sparks protest

By LIAT COLLINS

The private member's bill under which only Jews may run for the position of prime minister has met a storm of protest by MKs from both coalition and opposition parties.

The amendment to the Basic Law: The Government proposed by MK Michael Kleiner (Gesher-Likud) also stipulates that candidates for the premiership must have lived in Israel continuously for seven years prior to the election, an idea which was criticized sharply by members of Yisrael Ba'aliya.

MK Azmi Bishara (Hadash), who recently said he might consider running for prime minister one day, responded to Kleiner's bill, saying, "It reveals openly antidemocratic opinions. I will continue to present my candidacy as a real alternative to existing policies. One of my aims is to expose attitudes like the one expressed by Kleiner."

Labor faction chairman MK Ra'anan Cohen described the bill as "racist, evil and discriminatory against Arab citizens, who have equal rights." Cohen said he will recommend Labor MKs vote against such a bill if it comes up in the plenum.

Yisrael Ba'aliya faction chairman Roman Bronfman said, "The stench of racism, stupidity and worthlessness rises from Kleiner's bill. It represents only the fringes of Israeli society."

Yossi Beilin, a candidate for the Labor Party leadership, said he would submit a bill today requiring a two-thirds majority of MKs to pass amendments to the Basic Law: The Government that relate to who may run for prime minister. "Kleiner's bill is racist, and racism is foreign to us: It is contrary to Judaism and to the Israeli Declaration of Independence," Beilin said.

Knesset Speaker Dan Tichon rejected the bill out of hand. "Israel is a Jewish state, but it is also democratic, and all citizens have the right to submit their candidacy for the premiership. The right to vote and be elected, without regard to religion, sex, race or length of time spent in Israel, is a basic right. A bill like this might also lead to obstacles being put in the way of various sectors of the population running for the Knesset," Tichon said.

National Religious Party Secretary-General Zvulun Orlev said he opposes the bill as "harmful, redundant and causing strife between Jewish and Arab citizens."

MK Michael Goldman (Labor), former deputy education minister, said, "This bill is a serious attack on the basic values of democracy."

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WEATHER

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Haifa 8-14
Tiberias 6-15
Afula 3-14
Samaria 3-8
Tel Aviv 7-14
Jerusalem 2-8
Beer Sheva 6-14
Dead Sea 8-17

Forecast: Rainy. Snow in Hermon, might snow in the Golan and Gali mountains.

AROUND THE WORLD

	LOW	HIGH	COND.		
Buenos Aires	24	75	34	93	rain
Cairo	58	46	19	54	clear
Calgary	-18	21	62	36	clear
Hanover	15	59	28	82	partly cloudy
Honolulu	-10	82	82	72	clear
Houston	-12	10	-04	25	snow
Jakarta	28	88	29	89	rain
Hong Kong	17	88	18	89	partly cloudy
London	11	52	18	84	partly cloudy
Lyon	10	59	17	45	cloudy
Madrid	06	43	15	69	partly cloudy
Manila	26	82	30	80	cloudy
Montreal	-16	05	-07	19	clear
Moscow	-16	05	-07	19	clear
New York	18	37	10	60	cloudy
Paris	10	32	16	41	cloudy
Rome	01	34	12	54	clear
Salt Lake City	-07	19	08	32	clear
Singapore	28	88	24	75	cloudy
Sydney	16	36	08	49	cloudy
Tokyo	12	36	08	49	cloudy
Toronto	03	23	01	34	cloudy
Vancouver	-03	27	03	37	clear
Zurich	-03	27	08	32	cloudy

Winning cards

In yesterday's daily Chance drawing, the winning cards were the 10 of spades, the jack of hearts, the ace of diamonds and the ace of clubs.



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Important Announcement to Investors in England!

The Investment Director of Grimley, the giant British firm with some 19 branches in Great Britain and throughout the world, will be available for working meetings in our offices in Israel between February 3 - 6, 1997. To set up a meeting, and receive an up-to-date market overview from one of the leading real estate experts in England, please call Mr. Rony Gozlan, Director of RESHEF International Division, at 02-653-65-65.

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NEWSLINE
with Prof. Claude Klein, a Hebrew University specialist in constitutional law.

MK Michael Kleiner (Gesher-Likud) is submitting a private member's bill which says that only a Jew can be prime minister and candidates for the premiership must have lived in Israel seven years continuously before nomination. Are there any other precedents for such legislation, other than the example of the US president, who has to be an American-born citizen?

When the Basic Law: The President was legislated some 30 years ago, the suggestion was made that only a Jew could be president of the State of Israel. The suggestion was rejected then and this suggestion should be rejected now on the principle that it is racist. The test must be whether we discriminate between different citizens.

In the case of the US, it relates only to the fact that the president must be American born. There is nothing racist in that.

Most of the opposition to Kleiner's bill is on the grounds of racism. The bill, however, is based on the Law of Return. Is this not saying that the Law of Return, too, is racist?

The Arabs undoubtedly do see it as racist, but we don't because we say this is a Jewish state and therefore give any Jew who wants to immigrate the right to do so. But at the same time, we say that anyone who has citizenship, whether he is a Jew or an Arab, has the same rights. The racist or discriminatory element of Kleiner's bill is that it differentiates between people who are already citizens and says that Arab citizens can't do certain things. This is, of course, unacceptable and scandalous.

Is there any chance that such a law could pass in the Knesset?

None whatsoever. Keep in mind that any amendment to the Basic Laws needs a majority of 61 MKs to pass.

The bill is, apart from anything else, a stupid one because in any case there is no chance an Arab is going to be elected prime minister.

Isn't the bill based on the fear that an Arab candidate will run for premier, knowing there is no chance of winning, just to force a second round of voting for the prime minister, during which the Arab sector will be able to make certain demands and play off the Jewish candidates in a form of political blackmailing?

Theoretically that could happen. But we cannot stop the Arabs from running and organizing themselves. Until now, the Arabs haven't voted for just one party. If anything is likely to make the Arabs get organized and do that, it will be this type of bill.

Do you also reject the clauses of the proposed bill which say that candidates must have lived here seven years continuously before the elections, ruling out new immigrants and returning Israelis?

I have no problem with returning Israelis being elected. A citizen is a citizen. If an Israeli citizen lives abroad for 20 years but wants to run for election here, I cannot stop him. I cannot differentiate between one citizen and another.

The question of immigrants is more difficult. It is worth considering the possibility that the right to vote not be given straight-away but after a year or so and that the right to be elected to the Knesset and even more so the premiership come into effect only after a certain period of say three, four or even seven years.

Liat Collins

Handwritten notes and signatures on the right margin, including a signature that appears to be "אוריאל אבנר" (Uriel Avner).